

ANNUAL REPORT of the MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

TO THE

LUDGVAN URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR 1905.

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present my Report for the year 1905.

During the year there was 58 births (28 male and 30 female) registered, giving a birth rate of 25·22 per 1,000 per annum, being the highest since 1901, and 7·31 higher than the average of the four preceding years.

The deaths within the district were 41 (18 male and 23 female), giving a death rate 17·78 on the estimated population for the middle of 1905; being 1·16 above the average for the preceding four years.

There were five deaths under one year, the infantile death-rate per 1,000 births being 86·20, slightly higher than last year but lower than the average; 16 were 65 and over, eight of these being 80 years and over. The zymotic death-rate is low, viz.—0·43; this last is made by one death from Whooping-cough.

The natural increase of population was 17, this being higher than for the last four years.

The notifiable diseases for the year have been six in number, viz —three from Scarlet-fever and three from Erysipelas, giving a rate of 2·63 per 1,000 of population.

Deaths classified according to age periods.

	All ages	0—1	1—5	5—15	15—25	25—65	65 upwards
1905	41	5	3	2	3	12	16
1904	39	3	3	...	1	15	17

It will be seen that compared with 1904 the deaths in the different periods were about the same.

Causes of Death.

	0—1	1—5	5—15	15—25	25—65	65 upwards	All ages
Whooping-cough	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
Phthisis	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
Other Tubercular diseases	...	...	1	...	...	...	1
Cancer, Malignant disease	...	...	...	...	2	2	4
Bronchitis	...	...	...	...	...	2	2
Pneumonia	...	2	...	1	1	...	4
Pleurisy	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
Other Respiratory diseases	...	...	1	...	...	...	1
Premature birth	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
Accidents of Parturition	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
Heart disease	...	...	...	...	5	...	5
Senile decay	...	...	...	...	...	11	11
Mal-nutrition	1	1	...	...	...	...	2
Cerebral hæmorrhage	...	...	...	...	1	1	2
Peritonitis	...	...	...	1	...	...	1
Kidney disease	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
All other causes	1	...	...	1	...	...	2
	5	3	2	3	12	16	41

No deaths took place from Scarlet-fever, Diphtheria, Typhoid fever, Influenza, Enteritis, Erysipelas, or other Septic diseases.

Inspection of the District.

During the four months of my being Medical Officer to the Council I have visited and inspected the most important parts of the District, and with some exceptions have found most localities in a sanitary condition.

The houses are mostly old but in a fair structural condition. Some are without back doors, and have only very small windows in the back of the house, consequently preventing a good supply of fresh air through them. The houses in the district are scattered, but in places there is a closer aggregation. As might be judged, the older the houses and the poorer the locality, the lower the standard of sanitation. To take an example there is on the one hand Long Rock with its more modern houses, good water supply, and closet accommodation, and on the other, New Town and Castle Gate with old houses, poor sanitary conditions, and bad closet accommodation. In these districts one finds disused out-buildings, old walls propped up and in danger of falling, besides obstructing the movement of fresh air round the houses. At Castle Gate and towards Nancledra with perhaps one or two exceptions the houses are without closets of any description, the inmates having to manage the best they can. If no ill health can be traced to this absence of accommodation, yet this condition of affairs in a small house inhabited by growing boys and girls ought not to be entertained in these days. Although there are still many houses in the district without closets, yet on enquiry I find that the number is growing less each year, and in the case of Castle Gate action has now been taken for proper closet accommodation. During the year 12 houses have had closets erected.

The plans of the new houses in the course of erection in the district have been submitted to the Council.

Sewerage and Drainage.

There are no drains except a few slop-drains, the slop-water being thrown on the land. This plan seems to act well as a rule, and there are very few places where there is any serious accumulation of stagnant slop-water in the gutters. At White Cross, the present arrangement for carrying away the slop-water from the rows of houses facing the road seems to be very defective, and a system with a better fall would be most desirable, as the slop-water remains stagnant and seems to be a great nuisance during the summer months and in wet weather.

The streams through the different localities of the district are in a satisfactory condition as regards absence of pollution; these receive a large amount of the slop-water and help to carry it off from the surrounding land.

The stream at Long Rock frequently gives trouble and overflows.

The large manure heaps seen by the road-side in some localities, and which have been objected to by Dr. SPENCER LOW and your late Medical Officer of Health, are still deposited in these positions. Some of these are very much more objectionable than others. Where the country is level, the road broad, and the heaps consisting of sea-weed and stable manure, the conditions are not as bad, seeing that the manure is placed and removed from these spots during the winter season only. But where the heaps are on the higher side of a sloping narrow road, and where human excreta enters into the composition of the manure, the drainage from this during the wet weather is a nuisance.

Water Supply.

With some exceptions the water supply is abundant and good. Your late Medical Officer pointed out the dangers of the New Town supply. I have inspected the well situated in the old Brick fields; the water is at any time subject to most serious contamination, the danger being increased owing to its being a shallow well and not a running stream. The well being lower than the surrounding ground, all surface water for a distance around flows into it. At the time of my visit, human excreta was seen within six feet of the water; cattle also drink at this well. The supply ought either to be condemned, or enclosed so as to make it fit for drinking purposes.

During the winter months the water supply for Ludgvan Churchtown is good, but during the summer the flow from the two "shoots" on which the inhabitants of 32 houses depend gets very low and often fails altogether. There are two schools with an average attendance of 253 children; these schools are both without an adequate water supply. The girls' and infants' school is supplied from a large tank of rain water; this also often fails in the summer season, consequently they depend on the "shoots," these also often failing at the very time water is most needed in a school. All water for washing and cleansing the boys' school has to be fetched in buckets from the "shoots." This question has come before the Council in the past, and will no doubt be brought forward for its consideration in the future.

The supply of water for 19 houses at Nancledra is from an open stream running about a quarter of a mile along the roadside, and about half a mile on the inside of the road hedge: there is a good supply both summer and winter. The stream is subject to manural pollution; many of the householders complain of washings from a slaughter-house running into the stream; this should not occur if the water is carried to the slaughter-house, as it is a safe distance from the stream. The stream has been freed from weeds, etc., during the year.

Isolation and Disinfection.

Since holding office there have been no cases requiring isolating or disinfecting. A cottage could be procured in case of a serious outbreak. No doubt arrangements could be made with joining Authorities for the use of an isolating hospital and disinfecting apparatus if required.

From the class of farmers and from the visits I have made to farms in the district, I should say that the sanitary conditions of the dairys, etc., was good. But as the Dairy, Cow-shed, and Milk-shop Order of 1885 is not yet in force in this district, no examination was made.

I append forms duly filled up.

Yours obediently,

H. RUSSELL PHILLIPS.

